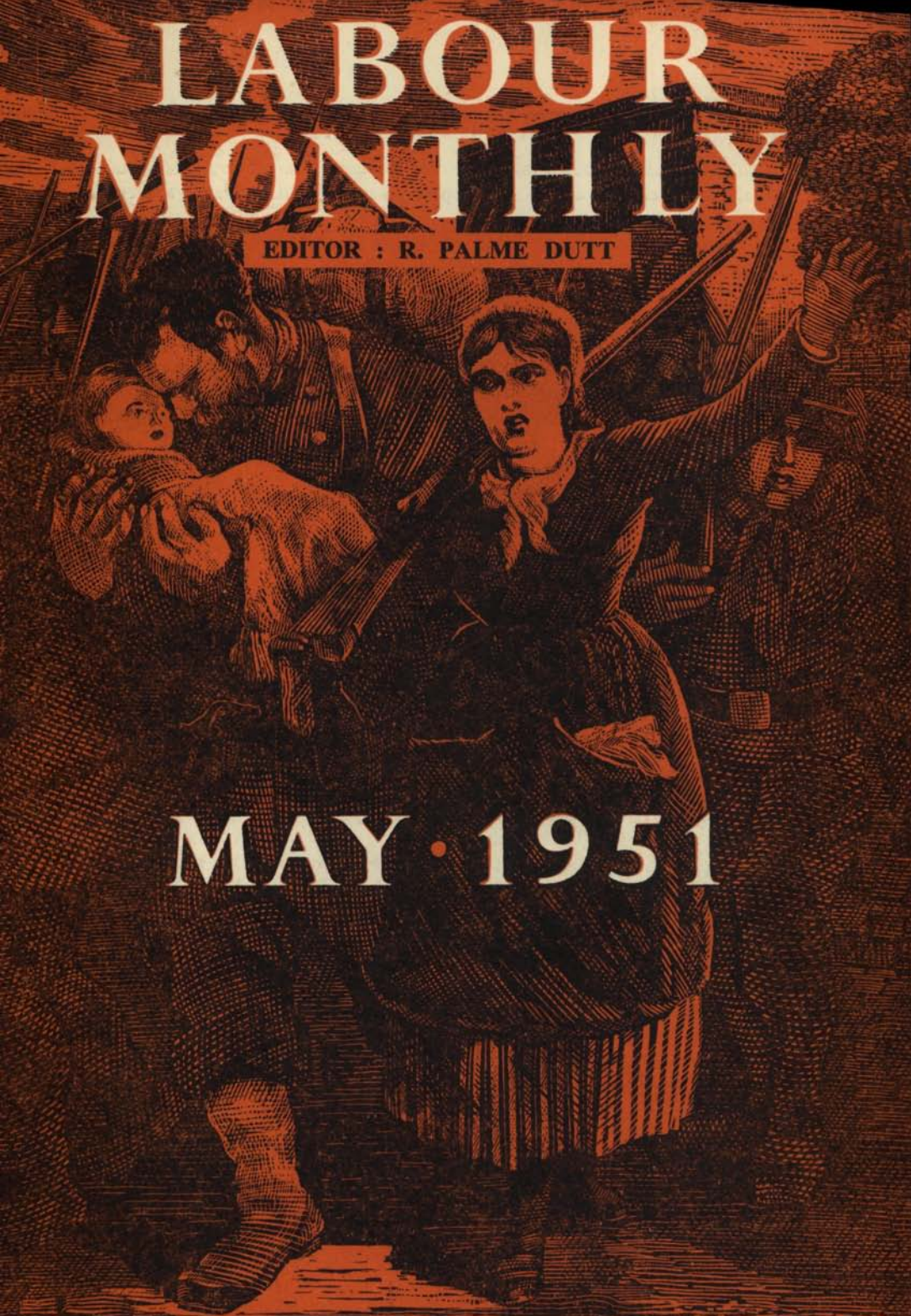
# LABOUR MONTHLY

EDITOR : R. PALME DUTT



## MAY · 1951

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR : PRICE 1s.

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# ANNIVERSARIES

EIGHTY years ago this month the first working class government in history fell, drowned in blood, after 80 heroic days. On this cover is a picture of those Parisian Communards.

Celebrating May Day, 1951, we remember another anniversary of working class struggle; 25 years ago, the General Strike in Britain. Many a London and Merseyside docker marching triumphant this year, many a railwayman and engineer—and many a miner for whom the working class 'in unvanquishable number' came out in support—will recall that May. Each year May Day reminds us of ever-increasing links of rich experiences. It remains to use them. How can it be that six years from May, 1945, when Hitler passed into limbo, ex-servicemen who then returned in a blaze of enthusiasm to build a new Britain, now face call-up papers, find vast preparations to extend dreadful wars against former allies? Rich experiences are not enough; their meaning must be mastered, if bitter lessons are not to be repeated.

In 1951 this Magazine of International Labour celebrates its first 30 years. From the shadows of Black Friday, 30 years ago, *Labour Monthly* came out to explain to the British miner, railwayman, docker, engineer, textile worker that their struggles were international in character, in common with the colonial peoples', to show them the progress of the world movement; to win unity nationally and internationally; and to prove that a Marxist analysis was needed if they were to use their daily experience to build their own future. I don't know exactly how many copies were sold of that July, 1921, issue; perhaps scarce as many hundreds as there are thousands sold now. Today the figure is on the 16,000 mark; and tomorrow? The answer is with each reader.

To turn to our celebration plans. We are publishing a special July number of 64 pages, with cover designed by the same artist; it includes a short history of *Labour Monthly*; messages from all over the world (the first greeting has come from inside a prison). A treasure will be the first of some hitherto unpublished letters by one of the greatest nineteenth century Englishmen. A problem for us to print enough; there is a paper famine, mainly due to rearmament stockpiling. We waited six months for only part of an order. We don't want a single reader to go without his copy or be unable to give one to a friend; but we must decide how many to print early in June. So please order from your usual bookshop or newsagent *today*, or there will be serious risk of your not getting it. Another part of our celebration plans has been our 1951 pamphlet series. (See back cover.) Now we announce something very special in No. 5. It is *New Light on Korea*, by D. N. Pritt, K.C. New conclusive evidence exposing the great swindle which keeps millions ignorant of the origins of the war; facts about the shady transactions at U.N.O.; the truth about the Chinese volunteers and the danger of war with China. Good, healthy meat in 32 pages, 1s. Available at the end of May but order NOW.

*Continued on inside back cover.*

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## Notes of the Month

# *Price of War*

**Were Premier Attlee well-versed in financial or economic science he would without difficulty understand that no State, the Soviet state included, can develop to the utmost civilian industry, launch great construction projects . . . continue a policy of systematic reduction of prices of consumer goods . . . and simultaneously with this increase his armed forces and expand war industry. Premier Attlee should know from his own experience . . . that an increase of the armed forces of a country and an armaments drive lead to expansion of the war industry, to curtailment of civilian industry, to the suspension of big civilian construction projects, to an increase in taxes, to a rise in the prices of civilian goods.**

V. I. STALIN, February, 1951.

ON this May Day of 1951 Stalin's warning to Attlee is being underlined in the harsh experience of the British people under the blows of the first Rearmament Budget. May Day is traditionally associated with the fight for peace. But on this May Day of 1951 the leaders of a Labour Government call on their followers to surrender their



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social aims for an arms race which can only lead to war. At the head of the May Day procession (if their police does not seek to ban it altogether) they raise the inspiring banner, no longer of international working class solidarity, no longer even of 'Let Us Face The Future', but of a White Paper which proclaims 'the first objective' of the Government's policy to be 'a greatly enlarged and accelerated rearmament programme'. At the very moment when the Soviet Union and People's Democracies are drastically restricting their arms expenditure in favour of vastly expanded social and construction programmes, with successive reductions of prices and rising standards of living, the Western Powers of the American War Bloc are subjecting their peoples to a colossal expansion of the already inflated arms programmes at the expense of social and economic needs, and with the openly proclaimed prospect of 'tough', 'unpleasant' 'sacrifices'. Where will this path lead? There is only one answer. If unchecked, it will lead to war. The *Daily Herald* called the grim martial perspective of the Economic Survey the 'Price of Peace'. They are wrong. It is the Price of War.

**Signs and Portents**

May Day, 1951, falls at a moment when the ignominious collapse of the vainglorious General MacArthur, the pompous 'I Am' and Lord High Everything of Western imperialism in the Far East, the American and 'United Nations' (save the mark) Supreme Commander in Chief in the war of aggression along the Tanaka road, is an anticipatory signal of the moral, political and military bankruptcy of the Western war policy. But it is not yet a signal of the ending of that policy. The frenzy continues, and even drives to new heights, as the rearmament programmes reveal. The fall of MacArthur is a demonstration of the deepening crisis of the War Camp. It is a demonstration of the strength of the Peace Camp, of the indomitable fight of the Korean people and the Chinese volunteers, of the tenacious peace policy of China and the Soviet Union, and of the overwhelming popular feeling for peace which in all countries saw in MacArthur the universal object of hatred as the embodiment of arrogant militarism, lust of conquest and reckless military adventurism. It has opened a new crisis of policy, a sharp conflict of contending factions and sections within the United States and in all the countries of the American alliance. But the real fight for peace has still to be fought and won. In the face of universal outcry, War



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Criminal No. 1 has been thrown overboard, but the other War Criminals remain in the seats of power.

**Why MacArthur Fell**

Why did President Truman sack General MacArthur? The President has hastened to explain that there is no question of a change of policy in Korea or the Far East. General MacArthur had taken upon himself as Commander in Chief to issue without authorisation a virtual ultimatum in the last week of February threatening to extend the war to China. He had followed this up with public declarations demanding a tactical line which would bomb Manchuria, bring Chiang's puppet army into action, invade the mainland of China, take the 'calculated risk' of provoking Soviet defensive action, and thus turn the local war in the Far East into the opening of a third world war. This frenzied programme was proclaimed as the only solution to the fiasco of the war of aggression in Korea on which General MacArthur and all the American warlords had so lightly embarked a year ago. General MacArthur explained that he endorsed the Republican leader Martin's statement that 'the opening of a second Asiatic front' was the only way 'to relieve pressure on our forces in Korea'. General Marshall had already stated earlier this year that 'the war in Korea is draining trained men from the United States Army faster than they can be replaced'. Thus the MacArthur Programme for an immediate unlimited extension of the war was an expression not of strength, but of weakness, of desperation, of reckless adventurism.

**A Division of Tactics**

From the standpoint, however, of the political and military authorities in Washington, who had to take all the factors into consideration, the remedy proposed with such provocative publicity by MacArthur was worse than the disease. MacArthur's rash utterances had aroused the intense opposition of all the countries of the American Alliance, not only of popular opinion, but of the European Governments, who saw their plans of expansion in Europe being sacrificed to the American aims of a Far Eastern Empire at their expense, as well as of Empire Governments, demonstrated in Lester Pearson's sharp declaration for Canada. The Pan-American Conference of Foreign Ministers had not gone well for the United States. There was intense opposition within the United States, where popular opinion was sick of the war in Korea, and current polls had



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shown a two to one vote for a complete withdrawal. From a military standpoint the strategy proposed was even more crack-brained than all the previous long chain of MacArthur blunders, from his initial light-hearted calculation, with Johnson, Dulles and Bradley, of quick victory in Korea, his confident assertion of the superiority of the American-trained and equipped Rhee army to the Korean People's Army, his assumption that American air and naval intervention would automatically settle the issue against an enemy without air and sea power, his subsequent assumption that the mere appearance of land forces of the American Herrenvolk would scatter the 'gooks' in terror, and his final Himalayan blunder of discounting the repeated public Chinese warnings as empty bluff. It was evident that if the relatively limited war in Korea was already absorbing the majority of American expeditionary forces, with a quarter of a million United States troops in the field, together with all that could be squeezed from the satellites, against a single small Asiatic nation and some Chinese volunteers, and was even so, according to General Marshall's confession, straining American manpower to the limit, then to propose at such a moment and under such conditions to take on the whole of China and possibly the Soviet Union as well was midsummer madness. The publicity of General MacArthur's utterances left the authorities in Washington with no alternative save either to accept his fatal strategy, forcing their hand, or to dismiss him. After a few days' dithering over the dilemma, they chose the lesser of the two evils. They dismissed MacArthur. MacArthur returned to the United States, with the hope to escape the ignominy of his fiasco in Korea, and to become the hero of the warmongers' chorus in the land of the dollar.

**Aggression Unchanged**

Does the dismissal of MacArthur mean that the grandiose American aims for a major war in the Far East, towards which the invasion of Korea was only a planned preliminary, for the military overthrow of the Chinese People's Revolution, and for the establishment of the new American Empire throughout Eastern Asia, have been finally abandoned? It would be premature to jump to any such conclusions. Not one iota of the policy of aggression in the Far East has yet been abandoned or modified. United States imperialism has not yet even accepted the final defeat of Chiang or the victory of Chinese liberation. That is evidenced by the stubborn refusal to recognise the Chinese People's Government, and the sub-



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sidised maintenance of Chiang's counter-revolutionary army under the protection of American guns. The aggression in Korea continues. The lawless seizure of the Chinese territory of Taiwan is upheld. The rearmament of Japanese fascism is pressed forward. Not MacArthur, but Warren Austin, official delegate of Truman, led the most violent bellicose anti-Chinese campaign at Lake Success. Not MacArthur, but Acheson exercised the most extreme forms of pressure on every American satellite to browbeat them into providing a fictitious majority for the American resolution proclaiming China an 'aggressor'—so much so that the British vote, cast in exactly the opposite sense to the preceding speeches of Attlee and Jebb, was sarcastically described in the American press as carrying a distinctly 'sulphuric' smell.

**For Peace in the Far East**

Why should United States official policy—not MacArthur's private policy, but United States official policy—go to such extraordinary lengths to compel the satellite majority in the United Nations to proclaim China an 'aggressor'? For the moral pleasure of passing an abusive resolution as an end in itself? Or as a preparation for future action, when the moment might be judged propitious to strike? The difference with MacArthur was a tactical difference, not a difference in outlook and basic policy. MacArthur drove at his objective like a bull at a gate, under conditions which would have guaranteed the isolation of American imperialism and its most rapid defeat. Truman, Acheson and Marshall seek to mask American aggression under the cover of the United Nations, to rally and enmesh step by step the whole satellite camp in their aggressive plans, to build up and enforce still more towering rearmament and military manpower, before advancing to their further offensive aims. The fight for peace in the Far East has still to be fought and carried through to victory. The fall of MacArthur is a symptom of the strength of the peace camp and of the crisis of the aggressive war policy. But if the jettisoning of MacArthur as the scapegoat were to serve as the lightning conductor to turn aside popular wrath against the aggressive war policy; if the fall of MacArthur were to be accepted by the popular movement as equivalent to the defeat of the aggressive war policy, with Truman, Acheson and Morrison cast for the rôle of angels of peace against the demon MacArthur, then it would represent, not a blow to the war camp, but a victory for the war camp. Popular opinion in Britain and all countries,



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which is profoundly hostile to the aims of war in the Far East, must follow up the fall of MacArthur by demanding a real change of policy which can alone ensure peace in the Far East: the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea, the liberation of Taiwan, the abandonment of Japanese rearmament, and the recognition of the Chinese People's Government and its rightful place in the United Nations.

**Mr. Morrison's Words and Deeds**

In vain Mr. Morrison, in his debut as Foreign Secretary, may strive to wipe away the memory of the evil record of his predecessor by speaking abstract words about his desire for peace, while maintaining and carrying forward every detail of the war policy of Churchill and Bevin. In vain he may seek to bask in the reflected glory of the fall of MacArthur, while in fact remaining in the service of Eisenhower, Acheson and Marshall. He proclaims his desire for the success of the Four Power Conference, proposed by the initiative of the Soviet Union in order to ensure the fulfilment of the Potsdam Treaty for the demilitarisation of Germany, and to obtain a reduction of armaments. But at the same time in his very first speech as Foreign Secretary he makes the first formal official repudiation of the Potsdam Treaty as a scrap of paper to which Britain's signature need not be regarded as valid, and endorses the colossal rearmament programme. He proclaims his desire for friendship with the Chinese people and his patient, tireless efforts to establish full diplomatic relations. But facts speak louder than words. The Foreign Office under Mr. Bevin accorded facilities, even though with delays, for a Chinese People's Delegation to visit Britain. The Foreign Office under Mr. Morrison shows the true hand of this 'lover of peace and friendship with China' by refusing a visa to the head of a Chinese People's Delegation to visit Britain and attend a Conference for Peace and Friendship with China, at the same time as an official Kuomintang representative of Chiang Kai-shek is allowed every facility to visit Britain in order to meet prominent personalities and advocate the aim of war on China. Mr. Morrison proclaims his desire to settle international differences by negotiation, and not by force. But as soon as the interests of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company are threatened by a strike of oilworkers and a call for nationalisation, Mr. Morrison despatches warships to the Persian Gulf. Such is the debut of Mr. Morrison.

'If they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?'



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## Arming for Aggression

Most decisive of all for the real direction of policy is the American-imposed war mobilisation and rearmament programme which now governs the entire economic and political structure of State organisation in this country and the strategy of the Government, as in all the countries of the American War Bloc. In a recent statement, on the occasion of the second anniversary of the Atlantic Treaty, Mr. Charles Spofford, Chairman of the North Atlantic Council of Deputies, declared:

> The total armament budgets of the twelve North Atlantic Treaty Powers have increased from a yearly rate of £7,500 million in the pre-Korea days to £20,000 million today.

That is to say, the arms expenditure of the Atlantic War Bloc has nearly trebled within 12 months. In the same period the proportion of the Soviet budget devoted to defence has increased from 20 per cent. in 1950 to 21 per cent. in 1951, or an actual increase of one sixth in expenditure (from 83 to 96 billion roubles). It is sufficiently clear from which side the present arms race is in fact being pressed forward. Indeed, what is conventionally called an 'arms race' is in reality at present a *one-sided* arms race. There is thus here no question of arming for defence. There is no question of rearmament being forced by the armaments of the Peace Camp Powers. It is arming for aggression.

## Paying the Price

In Britain the official total of £1,490 million for arms, as against £800 million last year, and £380 million in 1938-39, understates the real total. For of the nominal 'civilian' half of the budget, £97 million is for foreign and colonial services, and 'even that part of the Ministry of Supply vote not directly attributable to defence—some £50 million in 1951-52—is in the main related to defence expenditure' (Gaitskell in the House of Commons, April 10). This would increase the total to £1,637 million—equivalent to £32 15s. per head of the population, or £3 3s. a week for a family of five. It is not necessary to search further afield for the causes of the ever increasing social and economic hardships, the soaring prices (the so-called 'external' causes, through the turn in the terms of trade and the fabulous rise in the price of raw materials, are themselves the reflection of the American rearmament drive and stockpiling and the Korean war), the heavier taxes, and the barriers on the plans for social and economic development, which have made a



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mockery of the promises of 1945. The price of tolerating Labour Imperialism at the head of the working class movement is being paid. And the present price is only the preparation for future war.

**Welfare State ?**

The champions of Labour Imperialism have boasted since 1945 that, if they were not establishing socialism, they were at any rate establishing the ' Welfare State '—i.e., Liberal Social Reform. In the more recent bolder oratorical flights of the Bevan-Morrison combination and Transport House the ' Welfare State ' has become increasingly identified, not merely with ' Britain's peaceful revolution ', but with the ' free enterprise ' utopia of Truman's United States as opposed to the ' slavery ' of the socialist economic system in the Soviet Union. It is not necessary for present purposes to expose the class realities behind this stale deception of the so-called ' Welfare State ', in which the social benefits are in practice not only more than paid for from increased taxation of the workers, but the intensity of exploitation is increased. The special beauty of this propaganda is that, while the workers are constantly summoned to tighten their belts and increase production as the only way to improve their standards, the promised enjoyment of the fruits of their increased production is continuously postponed to a future date in the name of the urgent requirements of the current crisis.

**From Dollar Crisis to Rearmament**

Four years ago the dollar crisis led to the urgent call for sacrifices to solve the desperate deficit in the balance of payments. Now, as soon as with a flourish of trumpets the triumphant solution of the deficit in the balance of payments has been proclaimed, the new decision is announced to unbalance the balance and demand new sacrifices and belt-tightening in order to pay for rearmament. The ' Welfare State ' becomes the Rearmament State in preparation for the Warfare State. In the 1951 Budget of Gaitskell £1,637 million is devoted to arms, or 40 per cent. (with debt interest, £2,221 million or 53 per cent.), as against £1,215 million for social services, and £400 million for food subsidies, which do not prevent rising food prices. In the Soviet Union 1951 Budget 96 billion roubles or 21 per cent. are devoted to arms, while 121 billion are devoted to social services, and food prices and prices of consumer goods are simultaneously reduced. Thus in Britain the social services receive threequarters the amount of what goes to arms expenditure. In the



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Soviet Union the social services receive more than one quarter above the amount going to arms expenditure. If the difference between rising food prices and living costs in Britain and falling food prices and living costs in the Soviet Union is taken into account, the contrast is still more striking. It is evident that only the foundation of the socialist economic system and a socialist peace policy makes possible also the effective realisation of the Welfare State.

**In the People's Democracies**

But, the question is raised, this picture of the Soviet Union lower proportion of arms expenditure and higher proportion of social expenditure in contrast to the Western Powers leaves out of account the arms expenditure of the People's Democracies. It is in the People's Democracies, Mr. Eden informs us, that is to be found the 'cutting edge' of the supposed colossal arms preparations which are conjured up in the imagination of the Western politicians and publicists to justify their own real colossal rearmament. Let us examine the People's Democracies. It so happens that the Rumanian Budget for 1951 was presented on April 6, just four days before Mr. Gaitskell's Budget. How much of the Rumanian Budget is devoted to defence, despite all the bloodthirsty threats of Conservative and Labour Manifestoes to enter on a holy war to 'liberate' them (i.e. to restore the landlords, monarchists and fascists)? 15.8 per cent., or 3s. 2d. in the £, as against 24.3 per cent. or 4s. 10d. in the £ for social services. The Czechoslovak Budget for 1951 reveals 6.3 per cent., or 1s. 3d. in the £, for defence, and 28.7 per cent., or 5s. 9d. in the £, for social services. In Czechoslovakia meat consumption in 1950 was 40 per cent. above the level of 1949; sales of wheat flour increased by 28 per cent., of cheese by 29 per cent., of clothing by 49 per cent. In Warsaw meat consumption, which before the war was 105 pounds per head, had risen by 1950 to 134 pounds per head. In Britain meat consumption, which before the war was 109 pounds per head, had fallen by 1950 to 94 pounds. Such are the opposite lines of direction proceeding in Eastern and Western Europe. In the countries of socialism and socialist construction the social and economic needs of the people still take precedence of arms, despite the open and unconcealed threat from the West; and relatively low and restricted arms expenditure is accompanied by rising living standards. In Britain and Eisenhower's Europe arms take precedence of social needs; and colossal rearmament programmes are accompanied by falling living standards.



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## Concealing the Truth

In vain Gaitskell seeks to claim that his doubling of armaments and increase of burdens on the people is due to 'Soviet imperialism' and its armaments. Assertion replaces evidence; for the facts show the opposite. Unlike Britain, France and the United States, the Soviet Union is not engaged in war or in invading other countries; and its level of armed forces and arms expenditure is far below the level of Britain, France and the United States even before the new rearmament programmes. In vain the Economic Survey seeks to follow the same method of assertion without evidence, in order to 'enmesh the people in a net of lies':

> With post-war recovery so near completion, we could normally have looked forward to an easing of the economic situation in 1951. Unhappily we now face the new task of large-scale rearmament. Events in Korea and elsewhere have shown that there is no alternative if we are to safeguard our security and our independence. The Soviet Government has for long pursued an aggressive and intransigent policy towards the free world, and its huge armies are a menace to us all. . . The execution of a greatly enlarged and accelerated rearmament programme has now become the first objective of the Government's economic policy.

Every single link and assertion in this argument is demonstrably false until the final conclusion. There was no 'post-war recovery' interrupted by rearmament and war. On the contrary, the much boosted 'solution' of the *sterling* dollar deficit in 1950 concealed the continuance of *Britain's* dollar deficit. The sterling dollar surplus was based on intensified colonial exploitation and the soaring prices of colonial raw materials, which directly reflected rearmament, American stockpiling and the war in Korea. Thus the transition to Britain's colossal rearmament programme was no interruption, but a continuance of the same policy. Finally, the doubling of Britain's arms expenditure between 1950 and 1951 has not been necessitated by Soviet arms expenditure, which has only increased from 20 per cent. of its budget in 1950 to 21 per cent. in 1951, but is solely due to the open dictation of the American War Programme, which is visibly and ostentatiously directed towards aggressive war.

## May Day for Peace

For over sixty years May Day has sounded the call for international working class solidarity and for peace. Today, when the final criminal remnants of a dying and damned social order, the butchers



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of Korea, the murderers of Malaya, the gangster rulers of America, are piling up limitless weapons of destruction and clamouring for war on the working class and socialism and the freedom struggle of the colonial peoples, the call must sound as never before to the British working class and to the entire British people to stand up in their own defence and in defence of peace; to call a halt to the arms race and the wars in Korea and Malaya before the conflagration spreads further; and to demand the return to the path of negotiation and international co-operation, for the reduction of armaments and for a Peace Pact of the Five Great Powers. In the words of Stalin which require to be graven on the minds of every man and woman today:

**Peace will be preserved and strengthened if the peoples take into their own hands the cause of the preservation of peace and defend it to the end.**

April 18, 1951. R.P.D.

*The Editor of* LABOUR MONTHLY *will be very glad to receive contributions in the form of finished articles or of suggestions and data for articles. The customary proviso must be made that no responsibility is undertaken for manuscripts sent to him nor can be promise to enter into correspondence regarding contributions not accepted.*

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LABOUR MONTHLY BY AIRMAIL.—*To non-European countries (including Hongkong) except as below, post free: Single copy, 3s.; a year's subscription, 36s.*

*To China (except Hongkong), Australia, New Zealand, Japan and the Philippines, post free: Single copy, 3s. 6d.; a year's subscription, 42s.*



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# MAY DAY AND YOUTH

WILLIAM GALLACHER

MAY DAY is recognised throughout the International as the Day of the Working Class: the day when the forces are mustered and when stock is taken of the advance made in the preceding year. But May Day is especially a day for youth: a day when they not only look back, but look forward with the vision of a happy future of Peace and Socialism.

On this May Day I'd like above all things to speak to the young people of this country, the young people of 18, 19, and 20, but how to do it. That's a problem that cannot easily be solved. If I had the radio at my disposal, or the news reel, or the million wide circulated capitalist newspaper, I might manage it. Alas, these avenues are all closed to me—they are in the hands of the enemies of youth, of those who would drive the young people to death and destruction, so I must try other methods. Public meetings—Yes. At such I can talk to a few and ask them to carry the message around. So also will I write, even though most of my readers are of the older generation. They too can pass the message around. In my home town I take a walk up to the cross and watch the crowds go by. I see occasionally one or other of those who were my playmates in boyhood or companions in my youth, and I get a shock. They are old men. Their life lies behind them. They have travelled a long road and the end of it is drawing near. A few years, maybe a few months, and it is over. What applies to them applies likewise to me. It applies to Churchill, to Attlee and to others. But my mind does not dwell on this. I see the young people. Crowds of them carefree and happy. They are hurrying to the theatre, the cinema, the dance hall, or for the more studious the technical school. On a Sunday as I travel to a meeting I see them cycling or hiking with rucksacks on their backs. For them life has just begun. The world lies wide and fair before them. But how will it be next month or next year? They cannot tell, they don't want to think about it. Take life as it comes. Make the most of today and tomorrow will look after itself. Too many of them think that way and it won't do—for the old men, the men who have lived their lives, at the command of the madmen of America are preparing to destroy the world that by right belongs to the youth. Let them have their way and how many of these



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young people will live beyond their earliest years? Even now the life that should be so rich and full, is narrow and restricted through crises and armaments. Armaments for wholesale destruction of the world, the hands of our youth have just stretched forth to grasp.

To the young people I appeal, with all my heart I appeal, don't let them destroy your world. In their greed for profit, to maintain their pomp and power they have brought us to a sorry state, but we can get rid of these evil men who seek to keep us chained to the service and slavery of capitalism. If our forces are united we can become all-powerful and can change the whole course of events.

The other Sunday I spoke at a Socialist Sunday School in Glasgow. The president asked me if there was any particular song I'd like the children to sing. I asked for 'Marching All Together'. There's a verse I like, a verse that is a challenge to the youth:

> Good folks all a word with you
> What a world to bring us to
> We will build the world anew
> Marching all together.

There's a great, a mighty undertaking. You like building? What's that? You're an apprentice brick-layer and you're going to be a house builder; and you, you're in the ship-yard and you're going to be a ship-builder—fine. Good work. Well worth doing. Then that young girl. She is studying domestic economy; she is going to be a home-builder. So it is with all of them, all the young people of the working class and professional classes, while the parasites waste their lives and waste the wealth that others have created, they want to build, to construct, to see around them new wonders of their hands and brains taking shape. But here is a call for something that embraces and also takes in all other endeavours. A new world must be built—a world of plenty and a world of hope; a world with a bright and beckoning future. It is such a world that is sketched in the Communist Party programme, *The British Road to Socialism*. There is the blueprint. Let the young people study it and get ahead with the job. Every young lad, every young girl is wanted for the army of world builders. But we have to counter the widespread propaganda, the evil, vicious propaganda of those who want an army of world destroyers. There are no depths to which they will not descend to achieve their end. Day after day in the press, the radio and the cinema, it goes on. It is no wonder that young people as well as the older are confused and disturbed.

Worst of all is the part played by the leaders of the Labour



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Party, the party that was formed to fight the battle of the working class, for the defeat of the capitalists and for the establishment of the new world of socialism. These leaders have deserted the great cause. They are leading the workers away from, not towards, the goal. Shame be their portion. With oily tongues, they serve the evil purpose of the British and American war-mongers. Consider Mr. Morrison. While he was still prospective Foreign Secretary he made a speech on foreign affairs to a Labour Party gathering on March 3 in Leeds. He was very anxious to commend the brutal, soulless multi-millionaires of America to his audience so he set off with the story, it's not Wall Street or the reactionaries of America, he said, who are formulating American foreign policy, it's the friends of that great man Franklin Roosevelt. Just think of that. Is it true? Mr. Morrison knows as well as I do that there hasn't been a friend of Roosevelt's in the American government since 1946. Why does he have to try and spread such a palpable untruth? You young folks of Britain, don't be fooled to your own undoing. Don't be deceived. Write to Morrison and ask him to give you the name of one friend or supporter of Roosevelt in the American Administration. The American Government is a government of bankers and generals. The bankers are the 'delegates' of Wall Street, the generals are its 'gunmen'. Here is a frank confession on the part of one of the best known Commanders of the American Marines, Major-Beneral Smedley Butler:—

> I spent 33 years in active service as a member of our country's most agile military force—the Marine Corps. And during that period I spent most of my time being a high class muscle-man for Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers.
>
> Thus I helped make Mexico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys. . . I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers. . . I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests. . . I helped make Honduras 'right' for American fruit companies. . . In China, in 1927, I helped to see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested.

But Morrison went further. 'It's ironic', he said, 'that the American capitalists should adopt a correct democratic attitude to other nations while the Soviet Union tries to make a vassal of Yugo-Slavia'. Any evidence offered for the latter statement? None. An assertion without proof. Now it's true that Tito and his associates have been making a lot of noise about armies on the



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frontiers of Yugo-Slavia that nobody has ever seen. 'Invisible armies' seems to be the latest creation of the Soviet Union. But the noise has been for a purpose—the attraction of dollars and sterling to the almost empty coffers of Tito and Co., Ltd., has succeeded. Dollars and sterling are now busily corrupting the Yugo-Slav administration, while the future of the Yugo-Slav workers and peasants is mortgaged to the British and American imperialists. But the American capitalists have adopted a correct democratic attitude. Oh, Mr. Morrison, what a whopper!

Shinwell went to Germany recently, not to visit Buchenwald or the gas chambers where so many of his people were done to death by the army which it is now planned to rearm, the army that damned millions of Jewish people, young and old, to torture and to death, but as Minister of Defence. When Shinwell who has gone back on so many things he formerly claimed to stand for is anxious to assure us we are not a satellite of the Americans, I am not convinced. When he is followed by Lord Jowitt, now Labour Lord Chancellor, I am not any the more convinced. Just think, you of the younger generation—an American, Eisenhower, is in command of the Army. An American, Herod, (a sinister name), is in command of production and an American, Admiral Fechteler, is in command of the Navy. That's what Morrison says is 'a correct democratic attitude'.

Mr. Wilson, President of the Board of Trade, wails about sulphur. America controls it, cuts down our supply and increases the supply to Japan. That hits us very hard, says Wilson. But then wool—if America goes on stock-piling wool, we'll be faced with a disastrous situation by the end of this year. That's the melancholy foreboding of the President of the Board of Trade. It's a wonderful commentary on Morrison's 'correct democratic relations'. Is that enough or would you like some more? Here it is. Mr. Attlee told us after his visit to Washington that President Truman promised him that before the American government sent instructions to MacArthur with major political implications, the British government would be consulted. Wasn't that nice of him? But have a look at that again. Who sent instructions to MacArthur? The United Nations? No, the American government. It's an American aggressive war, with the United Nations used for what the Americans themselves call a 'front'—a deception. The American government will consult the British government. Mr. Attlee, the hypnotised rabbit, is happy to relay this. But what of the French government,



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the Italians, the Belgian, the Australian, Canadian and all the other governments at the United Nations, supposed to be ' allies ' in the Korea War? They don't count, they're by-passed. That's, presumably, the ' correct democratic attitude '.

But consultation—does it mean anything? Bevin told us, in a speech in the House of Commons, when the invaders of Korea had been swept back from the Chinese frontier, that British military experts were unanimously of opinion that the troops shouldn't go beyond the ' waist line '. But the Americans didn't agree. Was there any discussion? Was the United Nations taken into consultation? Not at all. The opinion of the British military experts was brushed aside and the Americans decided to go ahead, right up to the Chinese frontier, with the disastrous consequences that followed ' correct democratic relations '! It's a fiction manufactured to deceive the people, particularly the young, who must bear the burden and the toil imposed upon us by the aggressive designs of American imperialism.

In the Soviet Union, in Liberated China and the socialist countries of Eastern Europe, the young people are engaged heart and soul in the building of a New World on the ruins of the old. Great is the cause and urgent is the call. Young people of Britain, history has brought you to the crossroads. The evil way of lies and deceit, the way that leads to the morass of death prepared for you by decayed and dying capitalism, or the Marxist road that leads to peace and the New World of Socialism. That is the choice. Choose wisely. Choose well, ' Marching all together '.

*Postscript.*—I have just written to Morrison to ask him if I would come under the penalties of the Reserve and Auxiliary Forces (Training) Act if I advised the young lads to follow the example he set when he was of military age.

*Next month we print a special article by Albert Kahn, author of ' High Treason ', etc., and jointly of ' The Great Conspiracy '.*



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# BUDGETTING FOR WAR

JOHN EATON

If anyone is consoling himself that the Budget might have been worse and that, despite a dirty blow aimed at the teeth and the man with poor sight, 6d. extra on income-tax—with some slight compensating reductions, a little more indirect taxation but mainly on petrol and cars and not much else changed, is a pretty good 'get-out', it is time he woke from his dream. With war expenditure expanding to astronomical figures paralleled only in actual war, with the war programme put, as it has been, in the forefront of Government policy, the Budget in the traditional sense becomes only of subsidiary significance. The fiscal measures are just part of the means of putting the economy on a war footing. The real point is the tone of the Chancellor's speech which left no room to doubt that irrevocable steps in the transition to a war economy are now being taken.

The Government, acting on orders from Washington, has embarked on a war programme that—*at present prices*—will cost about £1,300 million in this year, 1951-52. The productive resources devoted to war purposes will be more than doubled. Housing and other 'social service' building will have to make way for the war machine.

> Expenditure on works and buildings for defence purposes will rise very sharply. . . (*Economic Survey*—Cmd. 8195—p. 6). . . There will be a reduction this year in the amount of building resources available for ordinary civil purposes. There is also a serious shortage of architects, quantity surveyors, draughtsmen and other works staff, and defence building is likely to interfere by making claims on these particular skills. (*ibid.*, p. 22.)

Civil building, however, will probably suffer less than other forms of civilian production; for it is less dependent on imported materials. Raw material shortages which are already causing unemployment and under-employment, will get worse as the Government proceeds to implement its policy of giving war programmes first pick.

> Shortages of materials for civil use must be faced in the interests both of our defence production and that of our allies. (*Economic Survey*, p. 17.)

Production for export—for which the workers were told, when the wage-freeze was imposed, all else must be sacrificed—is to be wrecked to please the warmongers. Referring to the metal-produc-



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ing industries which in 1950 provided two-fifths of Britain's exports and exported two-fifths of their output, the Survey states: 'A noticeable decline may be expected in the rate of export during 1951 as arms orders go into production'. The arms orders will fall most heavily on the industries that are most important in the export field. The pious hope is that secondary and particularly consumption goods industries will make good the loss in exports. The whole balance of industry is to be upset by the arms programme. Factories are to be turned over to war production on such a scale as to require expenditure of £100 million on machine tools during the next two years. (In 1950 the total U.K. production of machine tools was £40 million, two-fifths of which was exported.)

The cost of all this is to fall on the people; that is the Government's intention.

> There will probably be less clothing and household textiles available for private consumers. . . Supplies of durable consumers' goods will also be reduced. . . (*Economic Survey*, pp. 38, 39.)

The State will use its economic power, controls and other means at its command to throttle production for civilian use. The *Economic Survey* hints that unemployment will play a part. The extent of unemployment, the Survey says, cannot be forecast because it will depend upon supplies of raw materials and in solving the employment problems of rearmament 'much . . . will depend upon the extent of raw material shortages and the measures taken to reduce their impact on essential work'. (p. 10.) What else can this mean than that civilian production is to be obstructed to the point of creating unemployment? Now, look at this.

> The problem . . . is how to rearm as fast as we can, while maintaining a strong and healthy [*sic*] economy. The second objective (i.e., a 'strong and healthy economy') implies no rejection of the sacrifices or reversal of the drastic measures needed for the first (i.e. 'a greatly enlarged and accelerated rearmament programme'). Rather the opposite. It means we must not seek to lighten the burden of rearmament by measures which would mortgage the future. Exports must therefore, as far as possible, be maintained. Some particular types of exports are bound to be impeded by defence production, but the aim must be to make up for any such losses—and more than make up for them—by increasing exports of other things. Home investment needs to be continued at a high level, and we must try to meet most of the cost of rearmament by sacrificing for the time being the improvements we had hoped to enjoy in the standard of living and indeed cutting it back somewhat below its present level. (*Economic Survey*, p. 4-5.)



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What brazen insolence from a Government that calls itself socialist! The people are to make sacrifices but the 'economy', that is, capitalist privately owned industry, is to remain 'strong and healthy'.

The people already burdened with vast taxes are to pay still more. In 1950 indirect taxes, including rates, had already reached the huge total of £2,081 million (against £623 million in 1938). (*National Income and Expenditure 1950*—Cmd. 8203.) New taxes on petrol, cars, domestic appliances, etc. (designed to yield £61 million this year and £75 million in a full year) will mean further deprivations for the working-class and for the middle-class households. On the other hand, there is nothing in the budget that will seriously inconvenience the rich. The reduced depreciation allowances on plant and the higher tax on distributed profits will give a net yield of only £5 million this year and, although these taxes are designed to yield an additional £235 millions in a full year, all the indications are that profits are growing much faster than the taxes on profits. The Survey unblushingly forecasts rising profits because 'profits increase with national income'. (p. 44.) But tax as one may, who ever need doubt that the big capitalists will look after themselves well enough so long as they own vast and increasing capitals and by means of this wealth control still vaster aggregates of capital? In 1951 the Government expects to see accumulated profits, that is, profits minus dividends paid out, go up to £2,430 millions from £1,811 millions in 1950. (These figures are the totals of depreciation allowances, increases in business tax reserves and undistributed profits as given on p. 44 of the *Economic Survey*.) Meanwhile social services, the pride of the 'Welfare State', though not openly cut in the estimates, will be clandestinely crippled and cut by hostile controls and rising costs.

In so far as taxation, the use of controls and the restraint of wages do not wring the cost of war out of the people, the job is to be done by rising prices.

> What is directly obvious is extra taxation will represent only a part of the cost of rearmament. The main burden will fall, as the Survey emphasises, in the form of higher prices for consumer goods. . . About the third of the Government's assumptions the Economic Survey inevitably says very little. It is that wages will rise much less quickly than prices, in the Government's scheme of things, to absorb the increase in purchasing power that has already taken place, and so hold down the volume of consumption. (The *Economist*, 7.4.51.)

How great the price rises will be only the event can prove. The



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Economic Survey estimates are certainly too low for they underestimate the dislocation of war production, overestimate the possibilities of maintaining exports when the first-line industries have been switched to war production, and underestimate the squeeze that the U.S. imperialists intend to apply to their subservient rivals. To date the British workers have been increasing production year by year (in manufacturing industries productivity has increased by over 25 per cent. in the last four years), while real wages have been hardly holding their own. Now the Government's intention is—by rising prices—to make real wages and the standard of living of the people generally nose dive downwards. 1951 is only a beginning, only a first taste of what the three year £4,700 million war programme implies when it gets fully under way.

> Mr. Gaitskell's first Budget will be judged not solely by what he does in this year, but by the attitude of mind that he brings to bear on the problems of 1952 and 1953, when the burdens of defence and the Government's civil commitments will be still bigger. (The *Economist*, 7.4.51.)

The *Economist* calls for a ruthless use of whips against the people. All this is asked for in the name of the great lie that the ' Soviet Government has for long pursued an aggressive . . . policy ', the lie that Stalin's recent ' economic survey ' so trenchantly refuted when being asked to comment on Attlee's statement that the Soviet Union was constantly increasing its armed forces, he said that Attlee should have known that multiplication of a country's armed forces and an arms drive lead to developing war industry, to curtailing civilian industry, to stopping large-scale civilian construction work, to increased taxation, to a rise in prices for consumer goods. For if the Soviet Union is not reducing, but on the contrary, expanding its civilian industry and the construction of new mammoth hydro-electric power stations and irrigation systems, is not stopping but, on the contrary, continuing the policy of price reduction, it cannot, simultaneously with this, inflate war industry and multiply its armed forces without risking finding itself in a state of bankruptcy.

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# FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO

## ON THE EVE OF THE GENERAL STRIKE

A SURVEY of the world and home situation this May Day points to the same single conclusion. At the present stage of world capitalism the antagonisms both abroad and at home are growing more, and not less, acute. . .

In England the situation is that this inevitable conflict is reaching a critical and decisive stage, possibly even on May Day itself, or if it can yet be postponed, it cannot be postponed for long. The workers need to concentrate all their forces for this struggle, which makes demands that have not been known in England before. They will be well advised not to waste their time listening to the voices of those who for advice today can only offer them cloud castles of an imaginary future. The danger to the working-class movement is urgent. There is no magic way out of the impasse in England today. Only by united working class struggle, carried on with unhesitating determination, resourcefulness and sacrifice, can the workers even maintain their position in the present period of capitalist decline and hew a way forward to the next period, which must and can only be the period, not of capitalist revival, but of increasing capitalist break-up, of intensified struggles, and eventually, where the workers have found their way, of working class power.

From 'Notes of the Month', May, 1926.

If this fight is to be won it must be a mass class struggle in Britain as the only means whereby we may evade the first steps in a new process of wage attacks in every industry.

Our answer must be unqualified refusal to surrender to the attack. There must be no retreat in the face of this capitalist manœuvre. There must be no yielding on the national wage principle. There must be no reversion to district settlements. Above all there must be no sacrifice in wages, hours or conditions. . .

It remains to consolidate all our forces to resist the coming attack.

From *The Coal Report and After* by Arthur Horner, May, 1926.



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# A TELENGANA PRISONER WRITES

'OBSERVER'

IN the year 1948 there was civil war in the Telengana region of Hyderabad state, in which the peasants drove out the landlords and moneylenders and took over the land for themselves. The Indian army and the police intervened, and arrested a large number of peasants and detained them for months without charge.

Among those so detained was one Janardhan Reddy, then a schoolboy of 17.

What sort of a boy was Janardhan Reddy? You shall see.

After he had been in detention for some months, it occurred to someone that he and a number of other young men should be charged with the murder of certain persons. It was a curious murder case. Murders are usually reported to the police by what is called in India a 'First Information Report', filed within a few hours of the crime and giving the names of the persons said to have committed it.

This particular murder, said to have taken place on September 21, 1948, was first reported on March 5, 1949, even then the report gave no names of the persons said to have done the crime.

Nevertheless, this schoolboy was taken out of prison and on a day or two's notice tried on July 27, 1949, before a 'Special Tribunal', without any opportunity to prepare his defence, or to get a lawyer or witnesses.

The identification and the evidence generally were such as any competent lawyer could have torn to pieces; the case was tried in English, a language of which he knew very little, and no interpreter was provided for him. In the forefront of the prosecution's case was the assertion that he and his fellow-accused were Communists, as if that settled the matter—as indeed it did! (But at the time of the alleged murder the Communist Party had not even been made illegal in Telengana.) He was convicted and sentenced to death.

Ever since his conviction Janardhan Reddy has lived in a condemned cell in Secunderabad Jail; and when he is allowed out of his cell for exercise the only thing he can see is loops in the rope of the scaffold which is waiting for him.

His friends appealed to the Hyderabad High Court, where those



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who chose to say that they were not Communists had their death sentences cancelled. Twice his case has been taken to the Supreme Court of India, and twice rejected, not on its merits but on technical grounds.

He now lies under sentence of death, a boy still only 19 years of age, a victim of injustice and oppression.

Such a history might break any boy's spirit, or any man's. But what has it done to Janardhan Reddy?

One example may be found in a statement he made in his defence in another trial, in which his oppressors thought fit to charge him—this time in vain—with another murder, as if hanging him once would not satisfy them. He said:

> We have been tried and convicted on false charges. We may lose our lives but we shall not bow our heads. It is because the Congress is losing ground that in desperation it has resorted to hanging patriots like us. To the very last moment of our lives we shall hold high the banner of the Communist Party. We swear by the honour of the movement we represent: 'The people are invincible; they shall not yield to repression!'

This he said in his native Telugu language; but he has given another striking example.

In his long imprisonment he has succeeded in studying English, and in learning to write it. (Few, very few, boys in Telengana learn any language but their native Telugu, or learn to write at all.) And on March 23, 1951, after two and a half years of imprisonment, anxiety, uncertainty, on learning that his second and last possible appeal to the Supreme Court had been rejected for want of jurisdiction, he sat down and—using his hard-won knowledge of English—wrote to his lawyer the letter you see here.

[*Janardhan Reddy, with the other Telengana prisoners, is awaiting the result of an appeal for mercy addressed to the President of India; Pandit Nehru, the Prime Minister; and the Raj Pramukh of Hyderabad. Messages of support should be sent to the High Commissioner, India House, Aldwych, or cabled to Prime Minister Nehru, New Delhi. Some of the story of Telengana was told in* LABOUR MONTHLY *(July, 1950) under the title 'Oppression in India', by D. N. Pritt.—Ed., L.M.*]



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District Secunde
bad Jail
Barek No 9

8/23/3/19

My dear Comrade

Red salut,

I had sent a post card to Mr. Lalji and
reply has encurged me to send this let
to you. I am willing this to thank you person
and on behalf of the other comrads with me
we have just come to know of the desecison of
Supereme court. Belive me when I tell yo
that it had had no effect on us. we are
happy as before and will always be hap

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whatever be the final result. We do not even mind being hanged for the communist cause so dear to us all. It was to really our great good fortune to have an able and learned man of your reputation to plead for us. We are all so highly grateful to you and others who have been helping us together with you. We have done our duty and we are not afraid of anything. We are happy to have had an occasion to meet you here personally and to have been defended by you. We shall always carry grateful memories of our contact with you and the very kind and fatherly affection you showed to us all. We shall always remember you as long as we live and we hope you will not forget us. We do not know really how to thank you, for making the whole world know how we have been treated in our cases from the very begining and now we do not care for the end.

With all the good wishes and thankful regards from self and other eleven comrades who are all equally obliged to you personally I beg to remain your most thankful and loving.

Comrade. G. Raghupathi Reddy

From. S.C. Jail

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# LETTER FROM PEKING

CRITICISM and self-criticism is typical of the New China, so it's quite fitting to start this letter with a bit of self-criticism for not having written a lot more letters than I have done during the past year. There are so many wonderful things going on here, there is so much life and hope and construction in contrast with all the hopelessness and resignation to war and destruction that exists in many other countries; and there are so many lies spread abroad about what is really happening in China, that we who have the good fortune to be living out here ought to make a point of writing regularly to our friends. Hence the self-criticism. Of course there are what are commonly referred to in these parts as 'objective difficulties'; Isabel and I are undoubtedly leading fuller and busier lives than we have ever done before. Still we could have written more than we have done. So at least we'll start the year off right. I won't make any rash statements about good resolutions.

I'll try and make this letter into something of a very brief review of a few highlights of the past year as Isabel and I recall them, though it certainly won't be a serious summary. First something about Peking as we ourselves have seen it. The city has changed and still is changing fast. We live a dozen miles or so outside the city and don't go into town very often. Each time we do go, there seems to be something new. I remember in the summer of 1949 going to a meeting which had been organised to welcome back the Chinese delegates to the First World Peace Congress. The welcome meeting was held in front of the Gate of Heavenly Peace, Peking's traditional meeting place, which was the scene of important demonstrations at the time of the patriotic and democratic movement in 1919 (the May 4th Movement). The meeting place had not been appreciably changed in any way since that time; there was no really large open space, the whole area being cut up by hedges, odd statues and other masonry, lawns, trees and so on.

By the time the great meeting was held to celebrate the foundation of the Chinese People's Republic on October 1, 1949, the place had been transformed. The whole area had been cleared and there was the most magnificent meeting square stretching for hundreds of yards from the Gate of Heavenly Peace down to the Forward Gate. This year, for the celebration of the first anniversary of the founding of the new Republic, equally great changes have been made. Whole new streets had been laid, great wide avenues com-



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parable to the Mall in London. To do this not only had roads to be constructed but a great deal of the old imperial ornamental masonry —statues of lions, winged victories and other such imperial knick-knacks weighing several tons apiece—had had to be moved around so as to do away with obstructions to traffic, etc. These things are necessary, for the volume of traffic is increasing as Peking more and more takes on the air of an international centre and capital of the world's most populous country. Besides, there has to be plenty of room for the great popular demonstrations on October 1, May Day, August 1 (when the People's Liberation Army was founded) and so on, when the people turn out on the streets literally by the hundreds of thousands, to show their support for the People's Government and to demonstrate their own strength and solidarity. So the old meeting place, where once the people were fired upon by the warlord governments which served as the puppets of the different imperialist powers, must be made as large, open and free as is possible only in a genuine people's democracy.

The streets and statues are not the only things being improved. Peking's sewer system is hundreds of years old and was the most advanced in the world in its time. In fact, its inspection was an imperial responsibility, and officials of princely rank had personally to make an annual underground inspection. This was actually done in the progressive period when the sewers were first built. But then, the story goes, when the dynasty became decadent, it became a mere formality. The imperial official was carried in state to the entrance of the sewer system and there he was given a great formal welcome and a still greater banquet. Then, instead of descending into the tunnel to make an inspection he was carried overland to the other side of the city where the sewer system ended. There he was given another formal welcome and another banquet, after which one of his secretaries wrote a report in elegant classical prose, to the effect that the sewers had been duly inspected and found to be in excellent condition. As a matter of fact they got into a worse and worse state. Under the Japanese and the Kuomintang the rot became still worse. The K.M.T. collected special taxes from the people for maintaining the public sewers (as, indeed, they collected special taxes for everything they could possibly think of) but the money accumulated in the officials' pockets while the filth accumulated in the sewers. This year tons and tons of it were dug out. It was a common sight to see hundreds of soldiers shovelling it out and making great mountains of rich-looking black slime which was carted out of the city and distributed to the peasants in the villages as fertiliser.



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A similarly spectacular project has been the dredging of the lakes. Peking is a city of beautiful lakes, moats and canals. They too had been left in a terrible state of neglect and stagnation through the corruption of the K.M.T. This summer they were drained and the bottom of them was resurfaced. Cycling into the city I often crossed over the bridge between the north and south central lakes. Hundreds of soldiers, stripped to the waist, were swarming over the lake bed, carrying baskets of shoulder-poles, loaded with mud. The cleaning out of these lakes has not only helped beautify the city. It has done away with the breeding ground of bacteria which spread all sorts of diseases from malaria to meningitis.

Another thing that hits the eye—the trams. When we came into the city they were as ramshackle, down-at-heel, dilapidated a lot of trams as one could imagine. Now they gleam with paint, are always being dolled up with banners, bouquets, slogans and what-not, either for October 1, for the November 7 anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution, for Stalin's birthday on December 21 and so on. There always seems to be some good reason for a bit of decoration. And it's not just a matter of show. The whole tram service has been immensely improved. The secret is the development of a spirit of competition in serving the people (serve the people is the watchword of all who are employed in any sort of government Communist Party undertaking; under the K.M.T. 'swindle the people' was the guiding principle). Each tram has its own team of driver, conductors and maintenance personnel; this system of team responsibility has been copied from the Soviet Union, like a great many other recent innovations, and it develops a pride in work and desire to excel in service which is simply amazing—especially to the Old China hands, who would have sworn till they were blue in the face that such achievements as are now an everyday occurrence were quite beyond the Chinese.

Then there are the bookshops. Before Liberation China had one of the highest illiteracy rates in the world, not merely because the writing is extremely difficult and for centuries had been kept so by a ruling class which had a vested interest in keeping a monopoly in the art of writing. Now new bookshops run by both private people and the state are springing up literally everywhere. And the more of them there are, the more crowded they seem to get, just as if there were perpetual special bargain sales on. The volume of business is enormous. And the bookshops become informal reading rooms, where school kids of all ages excitedly thumb through the



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pages of the latest magazine, especially the illustrated ones, and above all those from the Soviet Union. The thirst for knowledge of the young New China has to be seen to be believed.

Peking, which used to be a rather old-world, leisurely city, is now becoming a bustling international centre. There is always some delegation from abroad visiting it. Most recently there have been the Czech cultural delegation and the Soviet basket-ball team. Besides this there are the diplomatic and commercial personnel from the various countries which have already established official relations with the People's Government. How different it is from just a couple of years ago when the most conspicuous foreigners who literally over-ran the city were the American soldiers. Now the only signs left of them are the stock of American canned goods—from tinned milk to Christmas pudding to sleeping bags.

I suppose the most important thing of all is that with all this atmosphere of growth and constructions there is no trace whatsoever of the inflation which was the absolute rule in Peking and every city under the K.M.T. Prices have been absolutely stable for—I'm not sure how long but I think it's almost a year now. In the old days people used to rush to invest their pay in goods the moment it was drawn. Those with money invested it in U.S. dollars. Now U.S. dollars are a bad investment, far less desirable than People's dollars (of the Chinese People's Republic). And that's not because of some fictitious, artificial rate faced by the Government. It's an economic fact which can't be got around. The black market has gone out of existence not simply because of a law against; there's no financial ground for its existence. Our monthly pay at school is still, following many years' practice in the old Liberated Areas, based on the current price of millet; and the rate has been $1,055 per jin (half a kilogram, or just over a pound) for as many months as I can remember off hand.

So much for the city. Now something about our life in the school. I suppose that school-teaching must sound to many people a pretty dull business. It's anything but that in New China, where teaching and studying lies at the very heart of the tremendous progress being made in every side of life.

This Saturday's paper, for instance, contained a story by 'Special Correspondent with the Chinese People's Volunteers in Korea'. It started off: 'The American and British war prisoners in this camp celebrated Christmas in their traditional manner with decorated Christmas trees, gifts and a gay evening party'. The story goes on



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to describe how American marines and infantrymen and British commandos celebrated Christmas wearing newly issued warm cotton-padded clothes, with gifts of food, cigarettes, candy, etc. One of them had been a prisoner of the Nazis during World War II, another had been a captive of the Japanese, all of them had been engaged in invading Korea and slaughtering its people who were defending their own country; they were under the supreme command of the so-called Christian MacArthur. Their generous treatment at the hands of the Chinese volunteers (the same policy is carried out by the Korean People's Army) made them think about the rôle they were playing in the war against the Korean people and gave the lie to the anti-Communist propaganda they had been fed. They were helped in this, the report stated, by one of the Chinese volunteers, who spoke English. Today I learnt that that volunteer was one of my former students.

I remember when he first came to the school. We were back in the village, west of Shichiachuang, in the autumn of 1948. He had been an underground Communist Party member in the student movement in Peking (at Yenching missionary university). When things became too hot for him, and his name was on the blacklist of the K.M.T. secret police, he had to escape to the Liberated Areas. He was not very happy at the school at first. He had been a student of literature and foreign languages—knew some French and a little Russian, as well as English—and wanted to go in for literature and the arts. Our practical approach to the study of English, for use, not as a social embellishment, struck him as too cramping and confining. So he applied to be sent elsewhere, to some more artistic institution.

But the Chinese Communists have had nearly 30 years' experience in developing their cadres. So Wang was prevailed upon by the Party to stay on. His English was well above the average; in fact he was among the best students in the school, which was at that time only a fraction of its present size. But he was unhappy and moped and mooned around a good deal and never fitted very enthusiastically into the rich group life.

I remember when we evacuated the village for the mountains when the K.M.T. were planning a commando raid on our area (the People's Liberation Army General Staff knew about the raid before the order for it had been issued by the K.M.T. general, one of whose staff officers was an underground Communist). I walked with Wang for the better part of one night and asked him about his



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family. His father was that rare creature, an honest official under the old régime. But this and everything else had to be dragged out of Wang by persistent questioning; he was anything but expansive.

This slightly sullen mood persisted for a long time. While waiting at Liangshiang, some 25 miles outside Peking, for the city to be liberated, the school launched a campaign for the ideological preparation for entering the city and the new tasks ahead. He was the problem of the top class, by no means eager to pull his weight in criticising himself or others in the attempt to raise the general level of thought and action which was essential not only for our school but for all who wanted to serve the people in the rapidly expanding task of liberating Peking and the whole of China.

So it went on with him for quite a while. But little by little he began to realise that his attitude towards the study of English was not suited to the needs of the present situation, that English as well as art was to be put at the service of the people. Within a few months after entering Peking he had snapped out of it completely. He became an assistant teacher and was later promoted to more responsible work in the school administration and in the Party. His enthusiasm began to grow greater and greater until it developed into that utter selflessness and conscious and voluntary suppression of all individualist desires in order to serve the people which is typical literally of millions of people in new China. There are over five million Communist Party members and though they are not and do not profess to be perfect, the number of them who daily give everything they have to the service of the people is enormous.

When the campaign to volunteer for serving in Korea got under way there was no holding Wang down. The school trade union set up tables in the school where one was invited to sign as being willing to volunteer to go to Korea. I remember being in the middle of a discussion with him about some matters in the English Department on a Saturday morning. As the noon hour approached he became more and more distracted and when I finally asked him what was the matter he explained that the signing up for Korea organised by the T.U. was to start during the lunch hour. At 12 o'clock he dashed off, though it turned out that the signing did not start till 12.30.

After days of anxious waiting he was told that he was one of those accepted. (By no means all who volunteered were accepted. At our school the main problem about the volunteering was to persuade those not accepted to carry on calmly with their work or



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study; practically everyone, men and women, students and staff, signed up. Anyone who says that the Chinese volunteers in Korea are not genuine volunteers but are regular troops—and that 'anyone' includes Acheson and Dulles and MacArthur and the whole gang of them—is lying, and I know it from personal, first-hand, eyewitness observation right here). Anyway Wang went off, though he'd been married exactly one week the day he left school.

Last night as part of the New Year's celebration the staff members of the English Department put on a little playlet about the war in Korea, showing the American invaders, the Korean people and the Chinese volunteers. It had been written only three days before by one of the research assistants and there had been only a little time for rehearsal squeezed into a heavy programme of work. So the performance was hardly polished and not everyone knew his part, and the prompter was busy and audible. But it was moving to a point which left quite a few moist-eyed—because the story was simple and direct and true and struck home to the audience, so many of whose comrades are in Korea now.

Wang's wife played the part of a Korean youngster whose family are slaughtered by the Americans and who goes off to join the Korean People's Army. I'd never seen her act before and I have no idea whether, like so many Chinese, she has an exceptional gift for acting. But whether it was artistic or ability of profound emotion springing from realism of the play, she put on a superb performance. And today she got the news about the part her husband had played in organising the Christmas party for the P.O.W.s. Perhaps he was chosen because of the Christian education he had received at Yenching. I don't know. The report said that the walls of the hall were decorated with quotations from the Bible. I've been wondering which they were. 'Those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword' perhaps? (10,000 American casualties have just been reported on the Eastern Korean front.)

A previous letter from Wang from Korea told about the cold—30 degrees below freezing and how in the whole of his journey to the front he had not seen a single Korean building undamaged by the war. He wrote that before he had hated imperialism out of intellectual conviction, but now he was filled with a feeling of burning hatred such as he could not have conceived of before. Yet he helped to arrange the two Christmas trees, with red candles, and to set up the large silver ball symbolising freedom. And in the speech which brought the party to a close, the paper reports, he 'explained to



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the prisoners that the Korean war could be ended only by the withdrawal of all foreign troops, leaving the Koreans to settle their internal problems themselves '.

This has been a long story. I think it shows more than the fact that teaching English in the New China links one directly with the world-shaking events in which the Chinese people are playing such a tremendous and constructive rôle. It also shows something of how the Chinese Communists can educate and inspire the Chinese people so as to make them absolutely selfless servants of the people, of the cause of peace. How can invaders attacking the country of other people who have never done them any harm, and who live 5,000 miles or more away, possibly hope to stand up against people with such inspiration and such a cause as the Korean and Chinese people have?

In the middle of writing this letter I heard a news broadcast from the B.B.C., including a review of the British press on Far Eastern affairs. Never have I heard such a pack of nonsensical lies about Communist aggression in the Far East and such clap-trap. The people here want peace. Wang wants to come back to the wife he left after a week of married life. But he has pledged, along with the other volunteers, that he won't come back till the last invaders are out of Korea. And she doesn't want him back before then, even though she wept the night he left (but not in public, she confessed it later). So their attitude expresses that of the Chinese people today. They want world peace and they'll struggle for it and give their lives for it. And they'll defend their country and their neighbours from any invaders.

(Written in January.)

*Advertisers please note: copy for advertisements should be received not later than the seventh day of each month.*



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# A VISIT TO HUNGARY

JOHN MAHON

THE Managing Director of the great engineering plant in Budapest came into the factory at the age of 11 as cleaner-up and runabout boy, became a skilled fitter and turner, and when the plant was nationalised became director on the recommendation of his fellow workers and the Party. What he said to me about the old régime struck a familiar note. Never sure of himself, the worker could be sacked if work was short, if he earned too much, or if the management disliked him. Most workers were unemployed several months each year in peacetime. Wages were low and ceaseless struggle was needed to prevent them going still lower. Piecework meant arduous and exhausting physical effort to gain perhaps 33% over ordinary pay, with the nasty feeling that you were working yourself or some fellow-worker out of a job. Promotion to technical, scientific or managerial work was almost impossible for the ordinary worker. The highest he could hope for was foreman, and that meant turning the screw on his fellow workers. The only concern the worker had with management, was to do what he was told and take the blame when things went wrong. Old age meant penury or dependence on relatives.

Now, going through the plant and talking, it was clear to me that the worker knows himself for a responsible person. He is deeply concerned with his work, not only his particular operation but the output of the factory as a whole because he understands what this work means for the country. The worker is conscious of the most satisfying incentives. Wages are in proportion to the quantity and quality of the work done. The more either improves the more he is paid. The worker knows that no one is exploiting him. Part of the fruits of his labours provides immediate well-being for himself, his family and his fellows, and the other part helps to build the great new enterprises and scientific institutions that will ensure a future of abundance.

He is informed on all questions of the life of the factory. He knows the production plan in advance, and says whatever he thinks about it. Progress information on production, costs and difficulties is regularly put before him. Any changes in techniques and machines are discussed between workers and management. In collective discussion he helps to fix the stint (or 'norm') of output on which his



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wages are based and he knows the decision is a fair one. Even the shadow of unemployment has gone for ever. There is every facility for study to improve his qualifications, and his road is open to the thousands of jobs of skilled men, technicians, scientists, required by the great expansion of industry. The factory is not only concerned with production. It builds houses for the workers. It offers scholarships and places in colleges. It is helping to solve the problems of building socialism in the village and on the farm. It is represented at all sorts of public conferences. On every question there is democratic discussion and representation through which the worker helps to decide the problems in every aspect of the nation's life.

After work the worker and his family have the free use of the House of Culture. These are now being built for every big plant or housing area. One was a four-storey modern building combining the functions of club, school and social centre. It had its big hall for a cinema or stage production, smaller lecture halls, many rooms for classes and discussion groups. You can enrol for technical, dramatic or political education. There is a ballroom and ballet dancing, chemical and physical experiments take place, there are special rooms for children including a nursery where mothers can bring the little ones while they take part in class or other activities. The library has 10,000 volumes and is rapidly growing. It included Byron, Dickens, Scott, Shakespeare and Shaw. No wonder there is not an illiterate worker in the factory, though under the old régime half the workers could not read. With all these incentives, hundreds of workers are becoming Stakhanovites, increasing their production three, four or five times above the normal. They do this not by extra physical effort, but by improving the process of production. The pieceworker under capitalism cannot do this; he must not interfere with the production process but do the operation as the management tell him. But under a People's Democracy the management must give every facility to the workers to improve the production process.

It is this tremendous change in the whole position of the worker which is reflected in the remarkable successes of the first Five Year Plan, an increase in industrial production in one year of 35 per cent. Under the old régime the life of the working peasant was one of ceaseless hardship, and a complete lack of any horizon. The old régime accepted ' the two million beggars ' as an unalterable necessity. The villages were devoid of medical aid or of cultural life except for the better off. Machinery was for the landlord and the



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kulak, the poor peasant strove to scratch a living from the surface of the earth with implements and methods hardly changed during a thousand years. Now the co-operative farm and the agricultural machine and tractor stations are revolutionising the material and the social life of the village. The former poor peasant either landless or with a smallholding, for whom a cow or a draught animal was unattainable wealth, is now entering the co-operative farms in thousands. Work has become far easier and more productive. The machine is now the ally and friend of the peasant instead of a rich man's instrument to increase the exploitation of the poor. The co-operative farms are growing rich, they are putting up new buildings, they count each year the increase in their cows, horses, pigs. They have bank accounts. The co-operative farmer eats every day meat and milk as well as cereals. Under the old régime he was lucky to eat meat on special holidays or great occasions. In the general meeting of the co-operative membership every aspect of farm life is discussed, including the cultural and political development of the members and their families. In the working brigade to which he is allocated the co-operative farmer is learning to apply scientific methods to the growing of crops or the care of animals. He is learning to replace the old individualism by new collective approach to labour and its problems.

From the towns come many forms of help to the countryside. Modern machines, books, the radio. Village culture is helped by the visits of actors, singers, and musicians. Colleges organise special classes to which the co-operative farms send their best representatives in all sorts of subjects connected with village life. The revolution in the village is breaking down the centuries-long exclusion of women from public and responsible activity. Peasant girls are becoming tractor drivers, agricultural experts and scientists and managers. One woman farm manager told us

> Eighteen months ago we started with equipment worth 150,000 forints. Now the value of our machines and buildings is more than 1½ million forints. We have built a new pigstye, a new building for the cows, we have put electric light into every building and every house. We are training our own electricians, bricklayers, plumbers, for our aim is to do everything with our own resources and without having to ask for outside help.

At another farm we were told

> We were founded in October, 1948; we had ten members and 129 poles of land. Now we have 136 members and 760 poles. We began with eight cows, four horses, 25 pigs; now we have 39 cows, 12 horses and 33 foals, 220 pigs, 350 sheep and 480 poultry. Last year the individual farmers got



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nine quintals of barley where we got 15, and where they got seven quintals of wheat we got 11.

This increase in production with less physical effort and greater dividends is now like a magnet attracting scores of thousands of small and middle peasants into the collective farms and into a new life.

The People's Democratic State means changes not only in the factory and on the farm, but throughout society. Can you imagine an English General, a model of military smartness and efficiency, proudly declaring that the fact that he was formerly a miner at the coalface and that his father and grandfather were miners before him helped him to understand what he has to do to defend the country?

To mark their affection and devotion to their Party, the workers of Hungary sent hundreds of the finest specimens of their craftsmanship as presents to the 2nd Party Congress. We spent a long time looking at these examples of artistic and scientific skill, and perhaps the most moving of all were the albums of which each leaf was a letter and a drawing from a boy or girl in the People's schools. They were simple, direct and affectionate letters thanking the Party for the new schools, the new books, the new medical and dental care, and they reflected the growing consciousness of living in one great family in which each cares for the other, which is such a marked feature of the People's Democracies.

The people have a great and growing pride in their country. Every performance of Hungarian music, of Hungarian ballet, every new Hungarian film, is eagerly appreciated and discussed. There is pride in the new Stalin Bridge, more than a mile long, which crosses the Danube, there is pride that a growing proportion of the new machinery is made in Hungary, the anniversaries of great days in the long fight of the Hungarian people against many enemies for their national freedom are mass celebrations, the workers feel that they are leading the nation and they are determined to lead it to more glorious achievements in the future than it has ever attained in the past. The spirit that animates the whole working people was forcibly and simply expressed by a delegate to the Party Congress who said 'We have had enough of capitalists, landlords and fascists. Now the results of our labour belong to us. Hungary is ours and we shall never give it up'.



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# LETTER FROM A SOVIET ENGINEER

V. SHINIAYEV

*Turner in the tool shop of the 'Calibre' Precision Instrument Plant, Moscow*

THIS letter is from a former sergeant-major in the Soviet Army, now a turner in the Moscow 'Calibre' Plant.*

Like all Soviet people I read with great attention Comrade Stalin's talk with a *Pravda* correspondent. And it brought up in my mind the memory of recent years—how we moved forward to the West, how we dreamed of finishing off the war and setting about a peaceful working life. . . I remember too how when I was demobilised after the long road from Moscow to Germany, I was seen off with kind words. I remembered my friends and comrades—both those who were with me in the tanks, and those who were returning together with me, in the same train, back to their homes, their families, to work.

And now it turns out, as Mr. Attlee assures us, that nothing of the kind took place. There was no seeing off, no meeting, no joyful tears, no work after the war. It turns out that nobody demobilised me, and I am not working at my factory but am still serving in the forces. . .

I believe it's not done to call foreign politicians hard names, even though they may deserve them. But the first thought that came to my mind when I read about Mr. Attlee's slander was this: 'So the Prime Minister of Great Britain is a liar!'

I have often read in the papers about the reports of British delegates who have visited the U.S.S.R. This and that, they say, we have seen in your country with our own eyes. And I don't think there has ever been a case when they did not admit that everything they had read about the U.S.S.R. in the British capitalist papers, everything they had heard from their Ministers, was one mass of slander, as they had now been convinced on visiting the Soviet Union.

We have just had the fourth price-cut in all the most essential consumer goods. Abroad, in some countries, as the correspondents are already reporting, they are either distorting this fact, or keeping

* Described by Mr. William Wilson, Scottish aircraft engineer, in 'Russia With Our Own Eyes', 1950 (pp. 48-57).



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silent about it, or at least mentioning it incidentally in a few words, as though it was unimportant. Why is this? Whose advantage does it serve? Those, I suppose, who like pretending that black is white, and a fist with a knuckle-duster is the hand of friendship.

Ask my mother, Yevdokia Ivanovna, what she thinks: does anyone in the Soviet country want a new war? Does our State yearn to seize somebody else's wealth? My mother is sixty years old, a plain Russian woman, a housewife and not a Party member. She has one school—life itself, and her good heart. My mother will reply: 'No, son, Soviet people don't want war. They're peaceful people. Don't think, son, that if they are peaceful they are weak. It's just because they are peaceful that they are strong. Did you see how they fought?' (She always calls you 'son' when she's talking to you.) Ask her if it's true that life gets better and better from year to year for the Soviet people, that prices are not too high for our pockets, that we have forgotten want? She will look at you with surprise: where have you come from, don't you know it yourself, I thought it was no secret for anyone!

Then why is it that what is so obvious to every member of my family seems to be quite beyond the mental grasp of Mr. Attlee and his friends? Why is it that what any Russian housewife can understand is not clear to the Prime Minister of Great Britain? How can he assert that the British Government is arming Germany, spending milliards on arms, forcing its people to draw its belt tighter, for this reason, that it has to keep up with us—and that we Soviet people are arming without stopping, we haven't demobilised our army, and so forth?

But how could we lower prices, build and build peaceful factories, works, canals, if we were spending vast sums on armaments, if our men who previously were fighting had not returned to their machines and fields? Attlee, after all, doesn't get that kind of result. Arm yourself to the teeth—and be short of food! It really does appear that Mr. Attlee is a bit weak in financial and economic science. It seems that my old mother understands such things far better than he does.

But can it be that Mr. Attlee and his friends don't know the truth? Of course they know it, but they hide it so that others should not know it too. All they want is to represent everything upside down; if they lie, then to lie to the skies, as Goebbels taught them. They need that lie: without that you can't keep the people in hand. And what do they care if the lie smells of blood? . . .



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Is it surprising that in Britain and in France there's less and less food, while prices don't stop rising? Where human life is valued at a farthing, the price of everything else is high. Where people know the real value of man, where they are concerned that he should live happily, where they think not of war but of peace, as in the Soviet country—there prices for commodities are continuously falling.

I read yesterday in *Pravda* that our people is making a clear gain of about thirty-five milliards of roubles a year on the last price-cut. This new tremendous figure makes one think: why have we again been able to lower prices to this extent? What else do we need for the Party and the government to be able to continue this policy of improving the life of the people? Whichever way you approach it, there's only one answer: to work better, more productively, less wastefully. I'm sure that our 'Calibre' worker Utkin, leader of a youth brigade in the fight for economy, feels that he's just had a birthday. And every Stakhanovite who has over-fulfilled his output quotas, who has been taking care of his tools or economising material, is thinking to himself: 'So here are the results!' And everyone is turning over in his mind what else could be done for our industry to grow, for dams to rise up, for trees to push up in the steppe, for the dry earth to be watered, for steel to be smelted faster. A working man has much to think of nowadays.

But the worries are not the same as they used to be, once upon a time; and what we talk about in the family is quite different, too. Nowadays people are talking more and more about their new plans, their inventions, what they are going to study. Here am I, for example, earning 1,200-1,300 roubles a month, and my wife 800-900. Both of us are working in the tool shop at 'Calibre'—I as a turner and she as a finisher. The money is all right, and what we are consulting about now is not how to plan our budget. That's become a simple matter for us. We are talking of something else. I want to study. Next autumn I intend to enrol in the evening technical school. Now it's not only a manager, it's the rank and file workman, if he wants to be progressive and of greater benefit, who feels the need to increase his technical knowledge. When I finish the technical school I shall most likely remain a turner, but a turner with a secondary technical education. For everything in the State is ours, all is for us. There—I have come back again to the value of man. For him there are price reductions, and all rights, and all possibilities.



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When I was returning home after demobilisation I did not think I should be able to become a student so soon. It seemed to me that several five-year plans would be needed to restore life to normal and heal our country's wounds. But everything went faster than that. True, I did not then think, either, that people who called me, a sergeant-major of the Soviet Army, their gallant ally and a fighter for peace on earth, would so soon cast greedy eyes on our property. So this too turned out differently. Well, Mr. Attlee can say what he likes. And not even what he likes, but what he is ordered to say by his masters across the ocean and at home.

Isn't it they who are trying to weave a web of lies over the face of ordinary people? But the ordinary man nowadays has learnt himself to understand great affairs. And I believe that he will not take lies to be the truth, just as he will not agree to consider war a blessing and peace a disaster.

*From 'Literary Gazette', Moscow. 3.3.1951.*

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# MERCHANTS OF DEATH

## No. 2: I. G. FARBEN

S.C.

'When is a war crime not a war crime?'

IN this year of grace and enlightenment, 1951, the answer to this riddle is so very simple: 'when the perpetrator of the crime can be of use to the forces of reaction who are preparing for a new war'.

Take the case of Herr Alfred Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach—Krupp the German Cannon King. When the war ended he was sentenced to twelve years' imprisonment as a war criminal. For the last two months and more Krupp and his fellow directors have been at liberty. No doubt they can be useful!

Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick, British High Commissioner in Germany, has some interesting views on war crimes. Around the time that the Americans released Krupp and company, Sir Ivone announced: 'there is no man in prison in Germany for war crimes whose sentence I will not be willing to consider in view of the changed circumstances'.

When is a war crime not a war crime? When the perpetrator is facing the EAST.

When the American High Commissioner McCloy ordered the release of Krupp, he announced that the decision was 'based mainly on new evidence'. That evidence does not appear to have been made available to the millions of men and women whose lives will be at stake in any future war, so we cannot consider it here. But there is evidence that we can consider, and the memories of some of us are not as short as our rulers would like to think.

So let us turn from cannons and cannon manufacturers to another great Germany industry, I. G. Farben, the German dye trust. If Krupp with his cannon provided Hitler with the sinews of war, I. G. Farben in 1914 and again in 1939 provided the energy that brought the cannon to life—explosives of all kinds, synthetic oil, synthetic rubber, almost everything that a Germany without overseas resources of supply needed to wage a war. When the war was over American investigators broke through the iron curtain of secrecy which had always surrounded the operations of I. G. Farben. They sorted through the files of the great dye trust; they dug up secret documents; they questioned directors and executives



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and gradually they built up a picture. It was presented in February, 1946, to Senator Kilgore's sub-committee of the U.S. Senate Military Affairs Committee. Some of that evidence is well worth recalling today. Some people would prefer that we should not recall it. Remember, trusts and companies in countries other than Germany were involved.

One 'exhibit' before the Kilgore committee threw interesting light on the art of camouflage. Let us quote from the exhibit: 'in the time of the first world war we more and more came to the decision to "tarn" ("tarnung" in German means "camouflage") our foreign selling companies, i.e., to establish such companies as firms of the law of the country concerned . . . in such a way that the participation of I.G. in these firms was not shown. The "tarnung" in the past has not only been of great advantage in the commercial and tax situation which figured in many millions, but also in consequence of this war the system gave us the chance on a large scale to secure our organisation, the investments and the advance on our outstanding claims'.

I. G. Farben was the greatest chemical trust in the world; and, after the fashion of trusts it had interlocking arrangements with great chemical and oil concerns in the United States and many other countries. After the fashion of trusts it used these arrangements in the interest of its own profit. Business is business: and war is the extension of big business by other means. The United States Assistant Attorney General, Wendell Burge, has thrown some light on what some of the interlocking trusts of big business did for the United States: 'In mobilising for war, we discovered almost too late they (the cartels) were responsible for shortage after shortage of vital materials. The fact is that they have retarded technological advance and the introduction of improved devices and products wherever such developments seemed to threaten their vested interests despite the fact that thereby, national security might be jeopardised. They have, indeed, obstructed, and in no small measure thwarted the declared foreign policies of the American Government, placing their own business interests above the public interests. . . In Germany Kaiserism, and later Nazism, received enormous impetus, indeed decisive support from the regimented cartelised structure of the national economy'.

Details of the known ramifications of just one of those cartels, I. G. Farben, would fill many volumes. There is no space here to tell of how it worked for the Nazi war machine which it helped to



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create, of how its industrial espionage system became one of Hitler's most valuable sources of information. Memory must pass on.

One wonders, does General Eisenhower remember? Does he remember a certain document—it was numbered JCS 1067 and when it was drawn up and handed to him in April, 1945, it was marked 'Top Secret'. It has been made public since that time. May we recall it to your mind, General? It was your directive as C.-in-C. of U.S. forces of occupation in Germany, and it ordered you among many other things to 'prohibit and prevent production of iron and steel, chemicals', and a host of other things that might be used for war, and 'to prohibit and prevent rehabilitation of plant and equipment in such industries'.

Then, if we remember aright, General, there was another document, 'General Order number 2'. It was a military government order dealing specifically with I. G. Farben and it opened: 'Whereas it is the main objective of the United Nations to prevent Germany from ever again disrupting the peace of the world. . .' It provided measures to stop for ever the machinations of the German Dye Trust. Perhaps you may remember, too, General, that forces, British, American, and, of course, German, were quietly and quickly at work which prevented that order ever being properly implemented. Even in those days there were powerful interests who knew that one day concerns like I. G. Farben might be very useful, and very profitable as well! and I.G.'s production plant had suffered very little in the war. It was all ready for work.

So, set free the merchants of death! Turn their faces to the east; and behold a miracle, they are merchants of death no longer: the red light from the east accomplishes a conversion more wonderful than the conversion of Paul on the road to Damascus. The merchants of death become the upholders of western freedom!

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## TRIBUNE OF THE PEOPLE

*Rise Like Lions,* by William Gallacher. (254 pp. Lawrence and Wishart. 8*s.* 6*d.* paper; 15*s.* cloth.)

As I read I was reminded of a phrase in *The British Road to Socialism*: 'A People's Parliament and Government which draws its strength from a united movement of the people, with the working class as its core'. When, as Gallacher describes in his first chapter, at the opening of the new Parliament in 1945, there was a memorable scene, with the singing of 'The Red Flag', we felt a foretaste of what it will mean when Parliament really draws its strength from the working class and the progressive sections of the people.

The disillusionment soon began. Gallacher's book tells the story of the betrayal of the people's trust placed in the hands of the 'chosen few'. The reader follows this betrayal through the experiences of a man absolutely loyal to the working class, never self-seeking, always outspoken; who truly draws *his* strength from the will of the common people. The voice of the people can be sensed in extracts he quotes from his speeches and interventions. *Rise Like Lions* is not just a recording of the 1945-50 Parliament. As a Marxist, William Gallacher sets the Parliamentary events, debates and laws in relation to the movement and the struggle outside Parliament in the country and overseas. One therefore watches the gap between expectation and achievement widen year by year. One sees the desires and aspirations of the common people flouted, and their promises, which won their support, broken.

Every subject interests Gallacher. So throughout the book there are many pictures of social and political matters in which he concerned himself. These throw a light on the make-up of the writer. Chapters on 'Dartmoor', 'Communism and Religion', 'Film and Folly', 'The Covenant'. Always speaking for, writing for, travelling to ends of the country on behalf of the underdog and the unjustly treated. Read his story of taking up the case of the injured boy; and of the Tory businessman. This story of the 1945-50 Parliament is also the story of Gallacher in those five eventful years. What an answer to the Hydes who try to depict leaders of the Communist Party as sinister and inhuman! In Chapter XIX 'By Way of Thanks', there is a glimpse of his friendly relations with the House of Commons staff. I personally know that he understates the friendly feeling that many of the staff, at all levels, have for him. He won their affection, not by tips or empty flattery, but by his qualities. Men like the House of Commons messengers, police and clerks know the M.P.s well. They judge them by their treatment of and attitude to the staff, not by fine speeches. No man stands higher in their esteem than William Gallacher—always helpful, never imposing, unself-consciously equalitarian.

William Gallacher will be 70 next Christmas. He has the energy of several younger men lumped together, but above all he retains the spirit of youth. This incident will always live in my memory: it was the occasion of the birth of baby Charles to Princess Elizabeth. The leaders of the Labour, Tory and Liberal Parties had uttered their platitudinous congratulations, when Gallacher rose amid the apprehensive frowns and sneers of Tory and some Labour Members. He first put the House in good humour. Then he said: 'The best way the leaders of the Parliamentary Parties could express their congratulations was to provide for *all babies* the conditions



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which baby Charles enjoyed'. Those who expected irreverence were silenced. But many Labour M.P.s were shamed. As one elderly Member said to me: 'That's what Keir Hardie would have said, and one of us should have said it, but *we* have lost the spirit'.

Yes, Gallacher has the spirit and courage. It arises from his unshakable faith in the working class and his hatred of the capitalists and their Tory Party. He despises those Labour representatives who betray the trust of the working class, but he never allows this to dominate his over-riding hatred and opposition to the Tories. He entitles his book *Rise Like Lions* because he is deeply conscious of the change in the situation and the mood of the common people. The story he tells should inspire many to seek to follow his example and devote without stint their lives to the cause of Peace and Socialism.

PHIL PIRATIN.

## THE PEASANT REVOLT

*The English Rising of 1381*. By R. H. Hilton and H. Fagan. (204 pp. Lawrence and Wishart. 10*s*. 6*d*.)

THIS book contains far more excellent things than can be discussed in one short review, but one at least must not be passed over. This is the very important contribution to the understanding of the peasant question which is contained mainly in the first and last chapters. This question has tended to be neglected in British Marxist writings, possibly because we have no peasantry on a significant scale. Yet the British Empire consists largely of lands with a peasant economy, nor can we hope to understand the path now being taken towards socialism in China and the Eastern Democracies without having mastered the peasant question. And, historically, it is impossible to explain the rise of capitalism without knowing how peasant economy was transformed and how the differentiation among the peasantry themselves created new class relationships throughout the countryside. On all this *The English Rising of 1381* throws a flood of light. As the authors show, the really essential feature of feudalism is the forcible appropriation by the lord of the surplus from the labour of peasant farmers: it is immaterial whether this surplus takes the form of forced labour, of payment in produce, of money payments or of a combination of all or any of these. At the same time the inner movement of feudal society results in changes that in the long run have the profoundest consequences, breaking up the village community which consisted mainly of a middle peasantry of approximately uniform status and creating at one end a small class of rich yeomen and at the other a much larger class of poor and landless peasants.

The same process, by the middle of the fourteenth century, had created a crisis for the lords who found themselves less and less able to continue the classic forms of feudal exploitation and were forced to seek new forms. It was at this stage that the great Rising of 1381 took place: its story forms one of the truly heroic episodes in the struggle of the English people. Yet as Hilton and Fagan show convincingly, the very fact that it was a *peasant* rising doomed it from the outset. The peasantry can only become a revolutionary force under the leadership of some other class, and in 1381 no such class existed. True, the immediate cause of their defeat was a trick. The point is that the trick only worked because of their political immaturity and confusion, above all because they saw in the state, as represented by the monarchy, a neutral force standing between them and their exploiters. But even without this any success could have been only short-lived. A peasant army disintegrates quickly because



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the peasant cannot live for long away from his holding, and this process would have been accentuated by internal differences, since, as we have seen, the English peasantry by this date were far from being a homogeneous class.

A. L. MORTON.

## BOOKLETS ON CHINA

*On the Party,* by Liu Shao-chi (206 pp. 3*s.*) *700 Millions for Peace and Democracy.* (82 pp. 1*s.*) *Women in New China.* (56 pp. 2*s.* 6*d.*) *The Sino-Soviet Treaty and Agreements.* (26 pp. 6*d.*)

Foreign Language Press, Peking. Collet's, London.

TWENTY months since the formation of the People's Republic of China have already made clear that that great event marked a major turning point in the history of mankind, as important, in the conditions of our time, as were the Russian Revolution of October 1917 and the military defeat of fascism in 1945 by the peoples of the world led by the Soviet Union. The first four English-language booklets to arrive in England from New China do much to explain the causes of the historic victory of the Chinese people and to indicate the path that the New China will now tread.

Liu Shao-chi's important book on the Communist Party will be valued for two reasons. First it explains how the Chinese Communist Party, based on the principle of 'serving the people', and guided by the teachings of Mao Tse-tung, i.e. Marxism-Leninism applied to the actual practice of the Chinese Revolution, was able to unite the Chinese people under the leadership of the working class and so defeat foreign imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism. Secondly, in the course of this explanation, it develops a number of important political and organisational principles of Communism which will be of incalculable service to all political workers in Britain who genuinely desire to emancipate our people from war, foreign domination and capitalist exploitation.

In old China there was a saying: 'A wife married is like a horse bought: ride it or beat it as you like'. Today all the directors, assistant directors and department heads of the Manchuria No. 1 and No. 2 Textile Mills are women. The rapid change in the status and lives of the women of China constitutes one of the most profound changes produced by the liberation of China.

*The Sino-Soviet Treaty,* and the articles in *700 Millions for Peace and Democracy,* are a decisive refutation of all those facile theorists of the British Foreign Office who still cling to the futile hope that the New China can be detached from the Soviet Union. From Mao's warning in 1939 'Any attempt to estrange us by rumour or slander will ultimately meet with failure'—down to the signing of the Sino-Soviet Treaty, February, 1950—the road has been clear to the people of China and the Soviet Union. It is the road of firm alliance, and mutual aid—an alliance which will be decisive for the whole world.

JACK WODDIS.

## PABLO NERUDA

*Let the Rail Splitter Awake and other poems,* by Pablo Neruda. (95 pp. Masses and Mainstream, New York. Collet's, London. 4*s.* 6*d.*)

THE work of Pablo Neruda, the great Chilean poet and leader in the world peace movement, deserves to be better known in Britain. It answers those who claim that poetry should keep out of politics and also those who think that the struggle for peace and socialism has little to gain from poetry. It also answers the men of Wall Street and the General MacArthurs of the world. Neruda



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began as a poet of pessimism and capitalist decay. His experience in Spain, where he went as a diplomat, made him an active fighter against fascism. On his return to his own country he became a Communist Senator, representing the saltpetre miners. He has since taken a leading part in the underground struggle against the dictatorship of Gonzalez Videla, the Chilean quisling in the service of the United States. How much he has gained in stature, both as a poet and a man, by his participation in the fight for freedom, the reader of *Let the Rail Splitter Awake* can judge for himself. The poem from which this anthology takes its title is a stirring appeal to the people of the United States to remember their democratic traditions. The 'rail splitter', of course, is Abraham Lincoln. It would be easy to say that the poetry has lost much in translation. What is more surprising is that so much has been retained which is deeply inspiring. Anyone who is interested in the fate of literature at the present time, should read *Our Duty to Life*, an essay included in this collection in which Neruda defines his position as a poet.

LON ELLIOT.

## CO-OP. PAMPHLETS

*Economic Planning and the Co-operative Movement*, by A. Bonner, *The Consumers' Movement*, by W. Walker. (60 and 64 pp. Co-operative Union, 1*s*. each.)

THESE two booklets are part of a series, called *Design for Study*, which is being issued by the Education Department of the Co-operative Union. They are intended 'to encourage and assist the study of Co-operative principles and techniques within the proper settings of their general social content'. Both represent the non-Marxist (sometimes anti-Marxist) standpoint which is characteristic of the material produced by the Co-operative College. Mr. Bonner in his outline is at pains to distinguish between economic planning and a planned economy. He asserts that 'A planned economy must be totalitarian in its scope; it is probably only possible in a totalitarian state', and that a planned economy for war is the only type 'which has been tried and been successful'. In a section headed *Voluntary Co-operation in a Planned Economy*, he says that the characteristic features of a co-operative society would disappear, and the movement could not continue. He is silent, naturally, on the great advance of the Soviet Co-operatives. In fact, Mr. Bonner, like most other exponents of Co-operative theories, fails to recognise the class basis of the state, and therefore does not see that the important issue for the Co-operative movement is not '*voluntarism*' *or state planning*, but *what kind of state?*

The outline on *The Consumers' Movement* deals with the question of consumer control of production and design, and makes a plea for a change in outlook, to 'remove the complacency of co-operative producers on an assured market, and to enable co-operative retail distribution to absorb more co-operative products'. The writer has very little to say about the main influence that decides what is to be produced and sold in this country—the profits of the capitalist—but he draws attention to one immediate problem of the British Co-operatives: the gap between what the movement produces and what it sells, and the fact that its wholesale organisation is distributing very much more capitalist than co-operatively-produced merchandise.

E.B.



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## WHO DWELL IN DARKNESS

Readers will find the series of Letters from Afar in this number moving and inspiring, I believe; glimpses of India, China, the Soviet Union and Hungary through the eyes of ordinary human beings, not blinkered by lies and hysteria. If only there were space for more! But space is not the only difficulty. A fifth letter, from an old reader in the U.S., with a personal story of victimisation and hounding, typical of those who fight for peace today in the land 'dedicated to liberty', we could not print because the writer 'must get a job somewhere, and the terror is everywhere'. But this is how it ends: 'You try to think that all the good decent people you know won't go the way of Germany. Then they seem so helpless, scared and inarticulate that you feel that, like the Gadarene swine, they are rushing toward the abyss. While I am, I suppose, just a middle class liberal, I do have a most passionate feeling that there is a way out, and that the Socialist world is going to be better than we have known. *Labour Monthly* makes the world plain to me and clears my doubt, confusion and despair. It really is a wonderful magazine. I hope you all realise what it means to us who dwell in darkness'.

## SOMETHING MUST HAPPEN

The cost of paper has soared in one year by 81 per cent.: this is as though your Players now cost you 6s. 4d. Things have to happen; one is, the fund must go up. Many thanks to the Canadian who gave us the benefit of a small legacy; and to Dubliner, who guarantees 2s. to put Dublin in the steady money. March total was

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